

SPECIAL SUPPLEMENT

"LA CORONA"

Seven Sonnets by John Donne

Set for Mixed Chorus a capella by A. Didier Graeffe

Author's Note

The setting of seven sonnets by Donne for chorus a capella might be of interest to the readers of SEVENTEENTH CENTURY NEWS, because it illustrates some of the problems encountered by the layman who again seeks life and meaning in seventeenth century poetry. This life and meaning must be contemporary without, however, distorting the essence of the period that created the poetry. Music in its more formal aspects is one of the bridges by which modern man can cross the time interval of three centuries without stumbling.

My setting is for the eye as well as for the ear. The pre-classical texture of the music is more apparent visually than in the heard sound. The harmony, from the strict modality of the first (Lydian) and second (Dorian) choruses, leads gradually into the contemporary sonority of the Fugue and the Passacaglia (which enclose between themselves a lament for two solo voices) and, finally, back to the more loose modality of the seventh chorus.

The music can be read at the keyboard or by the string quartet. For a performance, thorough acquaintance with the highly complex text (e.g., by speaking it in unison) should precede any reading of the music itself.

A CORONA, SEVEN SONNETS BY JOHN DONNE, FOR MIXED CHORUS A CAPELLA

LA CORONA; in the Lydian mode
Con moto

A. DIDIER GRAEFFE
NOV. 22 - DEC. 31, 1951

S
Deign at my hands this crown of prayer and praise -

A
Deign at my hands this crown of prayer and praise -

T
Deign at my hands this crown of prayer and praise -
Deign at my hands this crown of prayer and praise -

B

7
- , *mf* Wear'd in my low de-vout me-lan-cho-ly,

- , *mf* Wear'd in my low de-vout me-lan-cho-ly,

- , *mf* Wear'd in my low de-vout me-lan-cho-ly,
- , Wear'd in my low de-vout me-lan-cho-ly,

mf

13
Thou which of good, *cresc.* hast, yea art, trea-su-ry,

Thou which of good, *cresc.* hast, yea art, trea-su-ry,

Thou which of good, *cresc.* hast, yea art, trea-su-ry,
Thou which of good, *cresc.* hast, yea art, trea-su-ry,

cresc.

19

my All changing unchang'd An-ci-ent of days;
 my All changing unchang'd An-ci-ent of days;
 my All changing unchang'd An-ci-ent of days;
 All changing unchang'd An-ci-ent of days;

25 *meno mosso*

But do not, with a vile crown of frail bays, Re-ward my
 Re-ward my
 But do not, with a vile crown of frail bays, Re-ward my
 Re-ward my

31

primo tempo

muse's white sin-ce-ri-ty, But what Thy thorn-y
 muse's white sin-ce-ri-ty, But what Thy thorn-y
 muse's white sin-ce-ri-ty, But what Thy thorn-y
 muse's white sin-ce-ri-ty, But what Thy thorn-y

37

crown gain'd, that give me, A crown of glo-ry which doth

crown gain'd, that give me, A crown of glo-ry which doth

crown gain'd, that give me, A crown of glo-ry which doth

crown gain'd, that give me, A crown of glo-ry which doth

mf

43

flower al-ways; The ends crown our

flower al-ways; The ends crown our

flower al-ways; The ends crown our

flower al-ways; The ends crown our

mf

49

But Thou crown'st our ends, For, at our end be-

works, For, at our end be-

crown'st our ends, For, at our end be-

ends, For, at our end be-

mf

55

gins our end - less rest; now

gins our end - less rest; now

gins our end - less rest; The first last end, now
our end - less rest;

61

zea - lous - ly pos - sess'd, With a strong so - ber
my

zealous - ly pos - sess'd, With a strong so - ber

zea - lous - ly pos - sess'd, With a strong so - ber

67

thirst, my soul at - tends. 'Tis

thirst, my soul at - tends. 'Tis Time that

thirst, my soul at - tends. my soul at - tends 'Tis 'Tis

73

time that heart and voice be lif - ted high, Sal - my
 heart and voice be lif - ted high, Sal - my
 time that heart and voice be lif - ted high, Sal - my
 time that heart and voice be lif - ted high, Sal - my

79

va - tion to all that will is nigh.
 va - tion to all that will is nigh.
 va - tion to all that will is nigh.
 va - tion to all that will is nigh.

.ANNUNCIATION; in the Dorian mode
 con delicatezza e molto cantabile

Sa - va - tion to all that will is nigh;
 That
 That
 That
 That

7

All which always is All every - where,

which cannot sin, and

All which always is All we - ry - where,

All which always is All eve - ry - where,

14

which cannot die, yet cannot choose but

yet all sins must bear,

which cannot die, yet cannot choose but

which cannot die, yet cannot choose but

21

die, Faithful vir - gin, yields him - self to lie In

do, faithful vir - gin, yields him - self to lie

die, do, faithful vir - gin, faithful vir - gin,

die, do, faithful vir - gin, faithful vir - gin,

28

pri-son, in thy womb; and though he there can take no

In pri-son, in thy

In pri-son, in thy

In pri-son, in thy

35

sin, nor thou give,

womb; yet he'll wear Taken from my

womb; yet he'll wear Taken from my

womb; yet he'll wear Taken from my

42

which my death's force my thy.

thence, flesh, Ere

thence, flesh, my flesh. flesh.

thence, flesh, my flesh. flesh.

49

by the spheres Time was cre-at-ed, Thou wast in his

This system contains measures 49 through 54. The vocal line begins in measure 49 with the lyrics 'by the spheres Time was cre-at-ed, Thou wast in his'. The melody is written on a treble clef staff. There are rests in the upper and lower staves. A double bar line is placed after measure 52.

55

who is thy Son, and Bro-ther;
mind, Whom thou con-cis't, con-
who is thy Son, and Bro-ther;
who is thy Son, and Bro-ther;

This system contains measures 55 through 60. The vocal line continues with 'who is thy Son, and Bro-ther;'. In measure 56, there is a change to a lower register with the lyrics 'mind, Whom thou con-cis't, con-'. Measures 59 and 60 repeat the phrase 'who is thy Son, and Bro-ther;'. The lower staves have rests. A double bar line is placed after measure 58.

61

Thy ma-ker's ma-ker, and thy
cain'd; yet thou art now
Thy ma-ker's ma-ker, and thy
Thy ma-ker's ma-ker, and thy

This system contains measures 61 through 66. The vocal line continues with 'Thy ma-ker's ma-ker, and thy'. In measure 62, there is a change to a lower register with the lyrics 'cain'd; yet thou art now'. Measures 65 and 66 repeat the phrase 'Thy ma-ker's ma-ker, and thy'. The lower staves have rests. A double bar line is placed after measure 64.

67

Fa - ther's mo - ther. Thou *mf* hast light in dark; and
mf Thou hast light in dark; and
 Fa - ther's mo - - ther. *mf* Thou hast light
 Fa - ther's mo - - ther. Thou hast light

mf

73

shutt'st in litt - le room *ff* cloi - *mf*
 shutt'st in litt - le room *ff* Im - men - - sity
 in dark; *ff* cloi - *mf*
 in dark; cloi - *mf*

ff *mf*

79

ster'd in thy nit. dear womb.
mf cloi - ster'd in thy nit. dear womb.
 ster'd in thy nit. dear womb.
 ster'd in thy nit. dear womb.

mf *ff*

84

rit.

• NATIVITY, three-part canon
Allegretto giocoso

S *Immensity* cloister'd in thy dear womb, Now leaves his wellbelov'd im-
ms

A

T *Immensity* cloi-ster'd
ims

7
S pri-son-ment, There he hath made himself to his in-ent
A
T *Immensity* cloi-ster'd in thy dear womb, Now
in thy dear womb, Now leaves his wellbelov'd im-pri-son-ment,

13
S Weak enough now into our world to come; But Oh, for thee, for
A leaves his wellbelov'd im-pri-son-ment, There he hath made himself to
T There he hath made himself to his in-ent Weak enough now into our

19
S Him, hath the Inn no room? Yet lay him in this stall and
A his in-ent Weak enough now into our world to
T world to come; But Oh, for thee, for him, hath the

25

S from the Orient Stars and wisemen will travel To pre-vent Th' of

A come; But Oh, for thee, for him, hath the Inn no room? yet

T Inn no room? yet lay him in this stall and from the Orient

32

S feet of He-rod's jeal-ous gene-ral doom.

A lay him in this stall and from the Orient Stars and wisemen will

T Stars and wisemen will travel To pre-vent Th' feet of He-rod's

39

A travel To prevent Th' feet of He-rod's jeal-ous general nit.

T jeal-ous general doom.

46 Andante (alla breve)

S See'st thou, my Soul, with thy

A doom.

T See'st thou, my Soul, with thy faith's eyes,

B See'st thou, my Soul, with thy faith's eyes, how the Whirlball

66 crescendo molto my S

55

faith's eyes?

how He which fills all place, doth lie? *dim.* *mf* *f* *ff* *crescendo molto* *mf*

place, yet none hold him, doth lie? Was not his pity towards

dim. *mf* *f* *ff* *crescendo molto* *mf*

64

Was not his pity towards thee wondrous high?

pity towards thee wondrous high, That would have need to be pitied by thee? *dim.*

thee. wondrous high, That would have need to be pitied by thee? *dim.*

f *dim.* *f*

79 Primo Tempo

Kiss him and with him into Egypt go, With his kind mother, who partakes thy woe.

Kiss him and with him into E - gypt go.

His mother, who par - takes thy woe.

His mother, who par - takes thy woe.

mf *f* *mf* *f*

•TEMPLE; four-part fugue
Allegro moderato, ma con passione

IV

With his kind mother who par- Takes thy woe, Joseph turn back; see where your

With his kind mother who par-takes thy woe, Joseph turn
Takes thy woe, Joseph turn back; see where your child doth sit, Blowing, yea
child doth sit, Blowing, yea blowing out those sparks of wit, which himself

back; see where your child doth sit, Blowing, yea blowing out those sparks of wit,
blowing out those sparks of wit, which himself on the Doctors did be-
on the Doctors did bestow; The Word but lately could not speak, and so

16

Which himself on the Doctors did be- stow;

stow;

The Word but lately could not

The Word but lately could not speak, and lo It suddenly speaks won-

It suddenly speaks won- ders, whence comes it, that all which was, and all which

21

The Word but lately could not speak, and lo It suddenly

speak, and lo It suddenly speaks won- ders, whence comes it, that all which

ders, whence comes it, that all which was, and all which should be writ, A shallow

should be writ, A shallow seeming child, should deeply know? The Word but

26

speaks won- ders, whence comes it, that all which was, and all which should be writ,

was, and all which should be writ, A shallow seeming child, should deeply know?

seeming child should deeply know? The Word but lately could not speak; It

lately could not speak; It suddenly speaks won- ders, whence comes it,

31

A shallow seeming child should deeply know?

It suddenly speaks won - ders.

suddenly speaks won - ders, won - ders.

Whence comes it? With his kind mother who par -

With his kind mo - ther,

mf

36

With his kind

mf With his kind mother who par takes thy woe, Joseph turn

takes thy woe, Joseph turn back; see where your child doth sit, Blowing, yea

With his kind mo - ther, With his kind

mf

41

mother who par takes thy woe, Jo - seph turn back; turn

back; see where your child doth sit, Jo - seph turn back; turn

blowing out those sparks of wit,

no - ther.

Which himself on the Doc - tors did be -

mf

46

back. His Godhead *mf* *cresc.* was not soul *f*

back. His Godhead *f* *cresc.* was not soul *f* to His man - *f*

His Godhead *f* *cresc.* was not soul *f* to His man - hood, Nor had time *f* His Godhead *f*

50

to His man - *dim.* hood, Nor had time mellowed Him *mf* to this ripeness, *f* But as for *f*

hood, Nor had time *dim.* mellowed Him *mf* to this ripeness, *f* But as for *f* one which hath a long *f*

mellowed Him *dim.* was not soul *f* to this ripeness, *f* to His man - hood, Nor had time mellowed Him *f*

dim. *mf*

54

But as for *f* one which hath a long task, 'tis good, *dim.* With the Sun *f* to be - gin his *f*

one which hath a long task, 'tis good, *dim.* With the Sun *dim.* to be - gin his *f*

task, 'tis good, *dim.* With the Sun *dim.* to be - gin his *f*

to this ripeness, *f* But as for *f* one which hath a long task, 'tis good *f*

dim.

58

to be-gin his bu-si-ness.

his Godhead

was not soul

With the Sun to be-gin his bu-si-ness.

62

his Godhead was not soul to his man-hood, Nor had time

was not soul to his man-hood, Nor had time mellowed him

To his man-hood, Nor had time mellowed him

his Godhead was not soul to his man-hood, Nor had time mellowed him

66

mellowed him to this ripeness, But as for

to this ripeness, But as for one who hath a long task,

But as for one who hath a long task, 'tis good,

hood, Nor had time mellowed him to this ripeness,

70

one which hath a long task, 'tis good, *dim.* With the Sun to be-

'tis good, With the Sun *dim.* to be-gin his bu-si-ness;

With the Sun to be-gin his bu-si-ness;

But as for one which hath a long task, 'tis good, With the Sun

dim.

74

gin his bu-si-ness; 'tis good. He in his age's morning *mf*

He in his age's morning thus began, *mf*

He in his age's morning thus began, By miracles

to begin his bu-si-ness; 'tis good. He in his *mf*

meno mosso

79 83

thus began, *rit.* By miracles ex-ceeding power of man.

He *rit.* thus began, By miracles ex-ceeding power of man.

ex-ceeding power of man, By miracles ex-ceeding power of man.

age's morning thus began, By miracles ex-ceeding power of man.

rit.

•CRUCIFYING;• duet for soprano and alto solos
Tempo libero (♩ = 84), molto cantabile

V

The musical score is for a duet titled "CRUCIFYING" for Soprano (S) and Alto (A) solos. The tempo is marked "Tempo libero (♩ = 84), molto cantabile". The score is divided into systems, with measures numbered 1, 7, 13, 19, 25, and 31. The lyrics are written below the notes, and various musical markings such as dynamics (p, mf, f, meno mosso, a tempo) and articulation (accents, slurs, triplets) are present throughout the piece.

System 1 (Measures 1-6):

S: By miracles
A: By miracles exceeding power of man,

System 2 (Measures 7-12):

S: exceeding power of man, He faith in some, en - vy in
A: He faith in some, en - vy in

System 3 (Measures 13-18):

S: some be - gat, For what weak spirits admire, am - bi - tious hate;
A: some be gat, For what weak spirits admire, am - bi - tious hate;

System 4 (Measures 19-24):

S: In both affections many to Him ran, But Oh!
A: In both affections many to Him ran, But Oh!

System 5 (Measures 25-30):

S: the word are most, they will and can, A - las, and do unto the im -
A: the word are most, they will and can, A - las, and do unto the im -

System 6 (Measures 31-36):

S: -maculate, Whose creature Fate is, now prescribe a Fate, Measuring self -
A: -maculate, Whose creature Fate is, now prescribe a Fate, Measuring self -

37

life's infinity to a span; Nay to an inch.

life's infinity to a span; Lo, where con-

mf

43

Lo, where condemned He bears His own cross with pain, yet

demmed He bears His own cross with pain, yet by and by When it bears Him,

mf

49

by and by When it bears Him, He must bear more, more and die.

He must bear more and die; He must bear more and die.

mf

55

Now Thou art lifted up, Draw me, draw me to Thee,

Now Thou art lifted up.

61

meno mosso, ma marcato

draw me, draw me to Thee, And at Thy death giving

draw me, draw me to Thee, And at Thy death giving

mf *rit.*

67

such liberal dole, Moist, with one drop of Thy blood, my dry soul.

such liberal dole, Moist, with one drop of Thy blood, my dry soul.

72

«RESURRECTION» passacaglia
Andante con moto (alla breve)

VI

Soprano (S), Alto (A), Tenor (T), Bass (B) staves. The Tenor and Bass parts have lyrics.

T: my Moist with one drop of Thy blood my dry soul...
B: Moist with one drop of Thy blood my dry soul

(Theme)

I. Soprano (S), Alto (A), Tenor (T), Bass (B) staves. The Tenor and Bass parts have lyrics.

T: Moist with one drop of Thy blood my dry soul
A: Moist with one drop of Thy blood my dry soul
B: Moist with one drop of Thy blood my dry soul
B: Shall (though she now be in ex - treme de - gree

I. Soprano (S), Alto (A), Tenor (T), Bass (B) staves. The Tenor and Bass parts have lyrics.

T: Shall (though she now be in ex - treme de - gree
A: Shall (though she now be in ex - treme de - gree
B: Shall (though she now be in ex - treme de - gree
B: Too sto - ny hard, and yet too flesh - ly) be

III

- Too stony hard, and yet too flesh - ly) be

- Too stony hard, and yet too flesh - ly) be

- Too sto - my hard, and yet too flesh - ly) be

Freed by that drop, from being starw'd, hard, or foul,

mf

IV meno mosso e molto cantabile

Freed by that drop, from being starw'd, from being starw'd, hard, or foul,

Freed by that drop, from being starw'd, starw'd, hard, or foul,

Freed, Freed by that drop, from being starw'd, starw'd, hard, or foul,

And life, by this death ab - led, shall con - trol

f

V

- And life, by this death ab - led, life by this death abled shall control

- And life, by this death abled, life by this death abled shall control

- And life, by this death abled, life by this death abled shall control

Death, whom Thy death slew; nor shall to me

f

VI

Death whom Thy death slew, death whom Thy death slew; nor shall to me
 Death whom Thy death slew, death whom Thy death slew; nor shall to me
 Death whom Thy death slew, death whom Thy death slew; nor shall to me
 Fear of first or last death, bring mi-se-ry,

VII

Fear of first or last death, fear of first or last death, bring misery,
 Fear of first or last death, fear of first or last death, bring mi-se-ry,
 Fear of first or last death, fear of first or last death, bring mi-se-ry,
 in Thy little book my name Thou en-roll,

VIII (chorus)

in Thy little book my name Thou en-roll,
 in Thy little book my name Thou en-roll,
 in Thy little book my name Thou en-roll,
 Flesh in that long sleep is not pu-tri-fied,

X (chorus)

Flesh in that long sleep is not pu - tre - fied,

(chorus)

Flesh in that long sleep is not pu - tre - fied,

(chorus)

Flesh in that long sleep is not pu - tre - fied,

But made that there, of which, and for which 'twas;

my

X (melody)

⑤ But made that there, of which, and for which 'twas;

(chorus)

But made that there, of which, and for which 'twas;

(chorus)

But made that there, of which, and for which 'twas;

Nor can by o - - ther means be glo - ri - fied.

(chorus)

XI Tempo primo

Nor can by o - - ther means be glo - - ri - fied.

my

Nor can by o - - ther means be glo - - ri - fied.

my

Nor can by o - - ther means be glo - - ri - fied.

my

May then sin's sleep, and death's soon from me pass,

my

XII

May then sin's sleep, and death's soon from me pass,
 May then sin's sleep, and death's soon from me pass,
 May then sin's sleep, and death's soon from me pass,
 That wak'd from both, I a-gain ri-sen may

XIII

That wak'd from both, I a-gain risen may
 That wak'd from both, I a-gain risen may
 That wak'd from both, I a-gain risen may
 Sa-lute the last and e-ver-last-ing day,

XIV

Sa-lute the last and e-ver-lasting day.
 Sa-lute the last and e-ver-lasting day.
 Sa-lute the last and e-ver-lasting day.
 Sa-lute the last and e-ver-lasting day.

"ASCENSION," in the Lydian mode, with modulations

Con moto

VI

Sa - eite the last and e - ver - last - ing

Sa - eite the last and e - ver - last ing day,

Sa - eite the last and e - ver - last - ing

Sa - eite the last and e - ver - last - ing

day, Joy at that up - ri - sing of this Sun, and

Joy at that up - ri - sing of this Sun, and

Joy at that up - ri - sing of this Sun, and

Joy at that up - ri - sing of this Sun, and

Son, Yea whose just tears, or Tri - bu - la - tion

Son, Yea whose just tears, or Tri - bu - la - tion

Son, Yea whose just tears, or Tri - bu - la - tion

Son, Yea whose just tears, or Tri - bu - la - tion

14

Have pure-ly wash'd or burnt your dressy

Have pure-ly wash'd or burnt your dressy

Have pure-ly wash'd or burnt your dressy

Have pure-ly wash'd or burnt your dressy

mf

25

clay; Be-hold the High-est parting hence a-

clay; Be-hold the High-est parting hence a-

clay; Be-hold the High-est parting hence a-

clay; Be-hold the High-est parting hence a-

mf

31

High-est parting hence a-way lightens the dark clouds, which

way light - ens the dark clouds, which

hold the High-est parting hence a-way, lightens the dark clouds, which

hence a-way light - ens the dark clouds, which

mf

37

which He treads upon, Nor doth He by ascend-ing,
 He treads upon, Nor doth He by ascend-ing,
 clouds, which He treads upon, Nor doth He by ascend-ing,
 which He treads upon, Nor doth He by ascend-ing.

43

show alone, But first He, and He first enters the
 show alone, But first He, and He first enters the
 show alone, But first He, and He first enters the
 show alone, But first He, and He first enters the

49

(legatissimo)

way. strong Ram which hast batter'd heavin for
 way. strong Ram which hast batter'd heavin for
 way. way. strong Ram which hast batter'd

55

me, Mild Lamb, which with Thy blood, hast mark'd the

me, Mild Lamb, which with Thy blood, hast mark'd the

me, Mild Lamb, which with Thy blood, hast mark'd the

heav'n for me; Mild Lamb, which with Thy blood, hast

61

path; Bright Torch, which shin'et, that I the

path; Bright Torch, which shin'et, that I the

path; Bright Torch, which shin'et, that I the way may

mark'd the path; Bright Torch, which shin'et, that I the way may

67

way may see, Oh, with Thy own blood quench Thy own

way may see, Oh, with Thy own blood quench Thy own

see, Oh, with Thy own blood quench Thy own

Oh, with Thy own blood quench Thy own

73

just wrath, And if Thy ho-ly spi -

just wrath, And if Thy ho - - ly spi -

just wrath, And if Thy ho - - ly spi -

own just wrath, And if Thy ho - ly spi -

ms

79

rit, my Muse did raise, Deign at my

rit, my Muse did raise, Deign at my

rit, my Muse did raise, Deign at my

rit, my Muse did raise, Deign at my

s

85

hands this crown of prayer and praise.

hands this crown of prayer and praise.

hands this crown of prayer and praise.

hands this crown of prayer and praise.

ss

FINE